

Ideas for Social Studies Lessons

From the New Jersey Agricultural Society Learning Through Gardening Program

- 1) Learn how the Native Americans planted their gardens and plant a Three Sisters garden of corn, beans, and squash either in the garden or in large pots.
- 2) Read Weslandia by Paul Fleischman and discuss how civilizations grew up around the plants that are available in an area. Create your own civilization and the plants it relies on for food, shelter, and clothing
- 3) Read Century Farm by Cris Peterson and compare and contrast how farming was done 100 years ago and today.
- 4) Read City Green by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan and compare and contrast how gardens can be built in the city and the suburbs.
- 5) Celebrate Black History Month and read about the life of George Washington Carver, how he experimented with peanuts and improved the lives of poor sharecroppers in the South.
- 6) Ask each student to bring in a recipe that uses herbs from his/her ethnic background. Research the history of the herbs and the part of the world where they originated. Plant some of these herbs in the garden.
- 7) Make maps of the real garden and imaginary gardens the students create. Plot a compass course through the garden. Calculate latitude and longitude of the garden.
- 8) Examine a school lunch, research where the food came from, and calculate how many miles it traveled to get to your school.
- 9) Research what foods are grown locally today and in the past. Discuss why eating locally grown foods is better for the environment.
- 10) Research and report on harvest rituals from different countries and create your own harvest festival for your school.
- 11) Trace the history of familiar plants – where did they originate, who brought them to this country, the impact they have on our diets.
- 12) Research the state's agriculture and compare it to agriculture in other states.
- 13) Read about how the inventions of Eli Whitney, Cyrus McCormick, and John Deere changed farming.

14) Read How To Make An Apple Pie and See The World by Marjorie Priceman. Pick a simple recipe and map the origins of its ingredients. Make your own "See the World" class book about your recipe.

